



Advisory Committee Meeting

9/18/24 Fall Crisp Comes



AGENDA



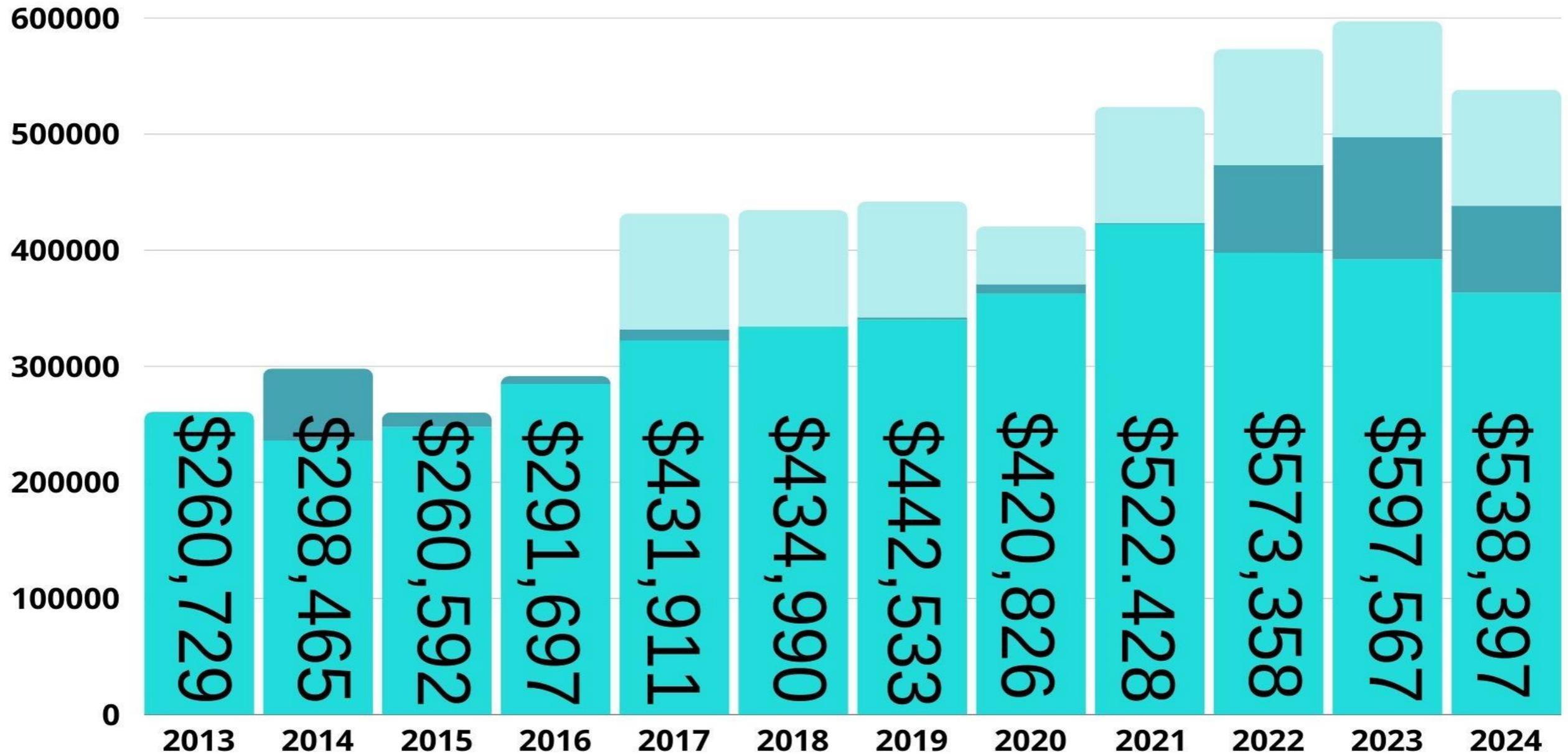
- I. Fund Totals and Expenditures**
 - A. Review of Balance/ Budget**
- II. Budget / 2024 Tax Donations**
- III. FY24/ FY25 Line Item/ Grants**
- IV. Spay/Neuter Voucher Program**
 - A. Numbers**
 - B. Wait List**
 - C. Providers**

- V. Promotions/ Events/ Marketing**
- VI. Animal Control Officers**
 - A. 2024 ACO Designations**
 - B. 2024 Core Training**
 - C. RFR Update**
 - D. CE Training**

FUND TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



Unexpended balance as of 9/7/2024 \$431,737



FUND TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



How our donations have grown....

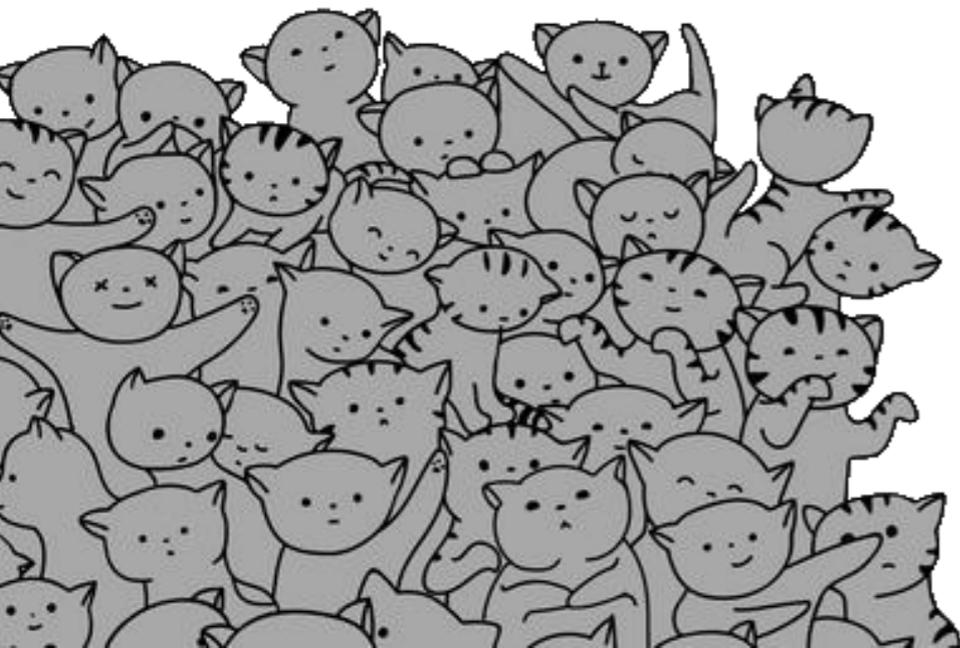


	\$ 5,099,516.44				
	total donations/grants	interest	line item	tax donations	online/grants
2013	\$ 260,729.55	0		\$ 260,670.55	59
2014	\$ 298,086.38	378.73		\$ 235,995.38	62091
2015	\$ 260,303.06	289.6		\$ 247,689.33	12613.73
2016	\$ 291,494.16	123.15		\$ 284,828.37	6665.79
2017	\$ 331,685.67	225.98	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 322,220.04	9465.63
2018	\$ 334,590.90	399.44	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 334,290.90	300
2019	\$ 342,064.72	469.06	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 340,150.72	1914
2020	\$ 370,686.42	139.68	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 362,536.42	8150
2021	\$ 422,405.32	22.89	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 421,415.32	990
2022	\$ 472,994.17	364.27	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 397,299.17	75,695
2023	\$ 497,567.70	1098.25	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 392,567.70	105,000
2024	\$ 437,589.52	807.82	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 362,589.52	75,000
	\$ 4,320,197.57	\$ 4,318.87	\$ 775,000.00	\$ 3,962,253.42	\$ 282,944.15
5,099,516.44	85%	<.0001%	15%		

FUND TOTALS AND EXPENDITURES



Revenue to date \$5,098,418	% of Spent	Expenses to Date \$4,615,752
Veterinary	72%	\$3,326,256.14
ACO Training	3%	\$122,170.00
Administration	25%	\$1,154,981.33
Marketing	<1%	\$12,345.28
Surplus	9% total intake	\$482,664.57



**Over 27,8600 vouchers
have been distributed.**





Proposed 2024 Budget

\$688,020 = \$420,000 from 2024 Donations

\$100,000 FY25 Line Item

\$168,000 from rollover from 2023

* would leave a buffer of approx. \$280,000
in the Fund

APPROVED BY ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1.10.24

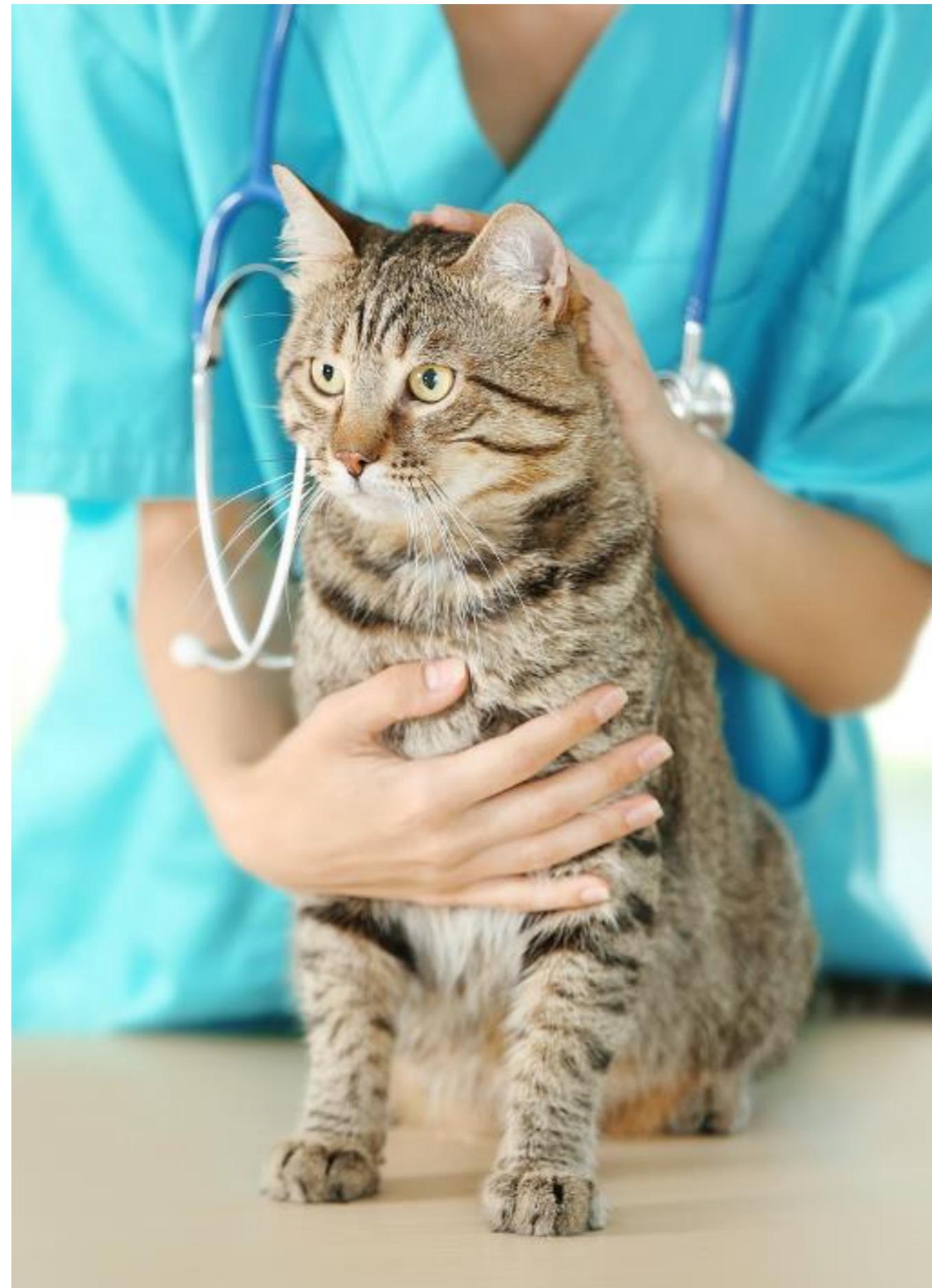
2024 Proposed Budget	Estimated Revenue \$550,000	Proposed Expenses \$688,020	current spent	to go \$130,000 currently floating!
Veterinary	73%	\$500,000	\$384,490	\$115,510
ACO Training	3%	\$21,920	\$0	\$21,920
Administration	25%	\$162,000	\$113,507	\$48,493
Marketing	<1%	\$3,100	\$85	\$3,015
Surplus	24%	-\$168,020		

FY23 Budget Line Item \$100,000
plus an additional \$25,715 from
MDAR Admin **FULLY SPENT**

FY24 Budget Line Item
\$100,000 **FULLY SPENT**

FY25 Budget Line Item
secured \$100,000.

IN PROCESS
\$1,040 spent.



The Stanton Foundation Grants
 2022= \$75,000
 2023 = \$105,000
 2024 = \$75,000

22' \$75,000 for dogs in Commonwealth
 (no restrictions)

May 23' \$30,000
 Emergency Grant (for E surgeries)

November 23' \$75,000 for dogs in
 Commonwealth (no restrictions)

May 24' \$75,000
**Designated for canines in
 municipal shelters or at
 501c3 organizations.**

Current **\$21,920** spent,
\$17,450 pending
52.49% utilized

The Stanton Foundation Grant
Interim Report 8.1.24

MASSACHUSETTS ANIMAL FUND

Support In May of 2024, the Massachusetts Animal Fund received a very generous grant in the amount of \$75,000 from The Stanton Foundation to provide canines in shelters free spay/neuter services across the Commonwealth!

Canines Helped
 To date, 85 canines in municipal shelters have received FREE spay/neuter assistance through The Stanton Foundation Grant. Of the canines helped so far, 46 are receiving FREE spays and 39 are receiving free neuters. The grant is open to all types of canines and has already helped over 19 different breeds from tiny chihuahua/ yorkie mixes to gigantic cane corsos and great pyrenees.

Areas Supported
 This grant has already sent vouchers to provide FREE services to canines in 35 municipalities through the collaborative effort between the Fund, 27 veterinary providers and 6 municipal partners.

Program Impact
 Since the grant period started, 85 canines housed in municipal shelters received immediate spay/neuter/vaccination vouchers as soon as eligibility was verified, saving their municipality an average of \$320 per animal for their care and allowing Mass Animal Fund to send out additional vouchers matching one for every animal covered by the grant.

Lives Saved
 Thanks to The Stanton Foundation support, 12 canines (out of the 85 helped) received vouchers for FREE spay/neuter services after they ended up in a shelter because of a critical animal welfare issue, such as hoarding or abuse. 14 canines received vouchers for FREE spay/neuter services because their family could not keep them due to a housing issue. 1 canine received a FREE spay voucher after their owner passed away. 49 canines who were found as strays and were not claimed received FREE spay/neuter vouchers.

All of the canines spayed/neutered through this grant have been fast tracked towards adoption through their municipalities or through transfers to local shelters/rescues.

Grant Utilized **\$25,925 expended** **34.6%**
From May 1, 24' - August 1, 24' 85 canines have received vouchers. \$320 average cost of care for redeemed vouchers.

SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM

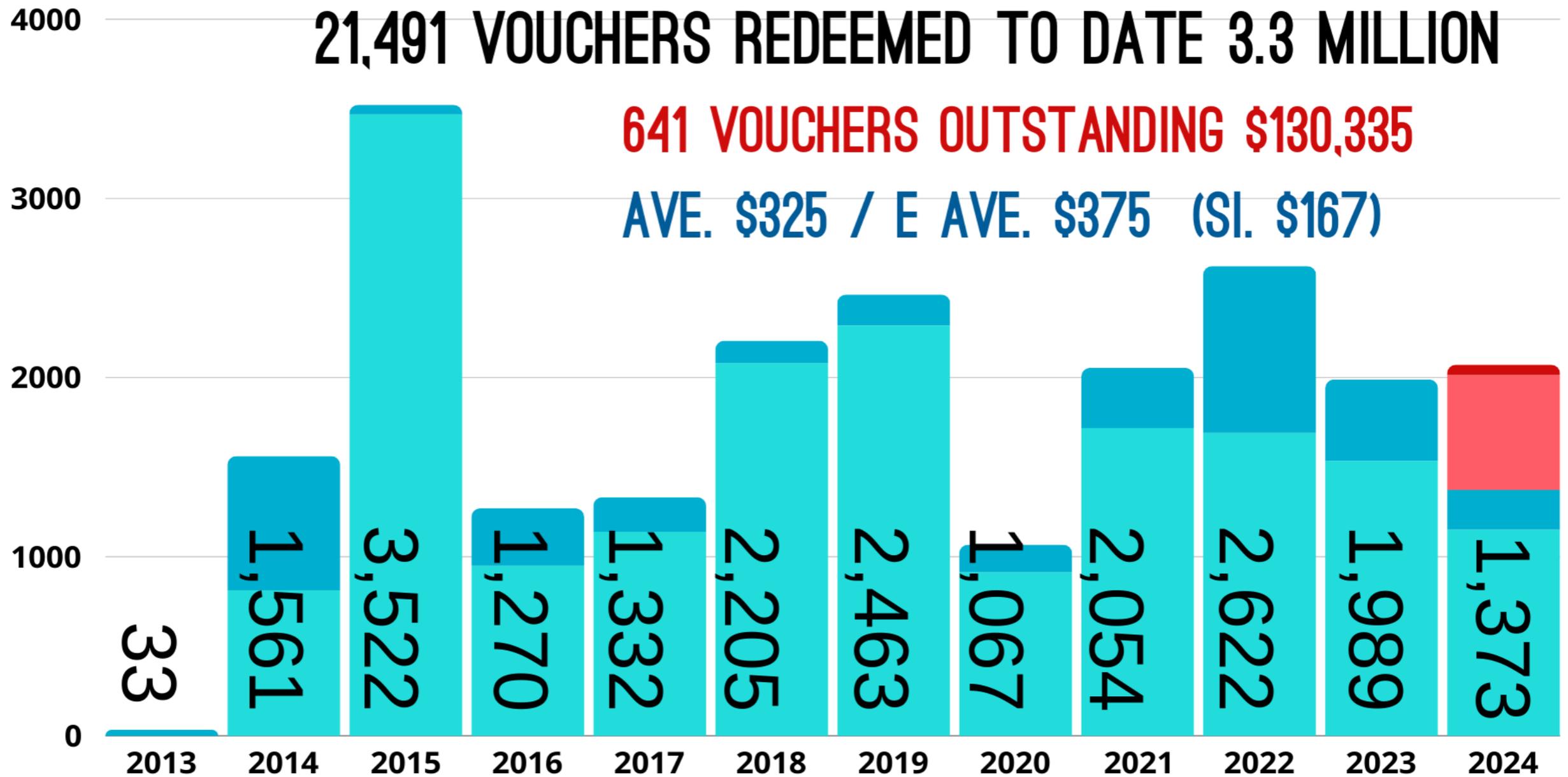


***AS OF 9/18/24**

21,491 VOUCHERS REDEEMED TO DATE 3.3 MILLION

641 VOUCHERS OUTSTANDING \$130,335

AVE. \$325 / E AVE. \$375 (SI. \$167)



SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



S/N Quick Notes:

Newest Providers-

Friends of Franklin County Regional
Berkshire Humane
Mill Valley Veterinary (Belchertown)

2 providers in process **(FIZZLED)**

1-Worcester County

1-Plymouth County

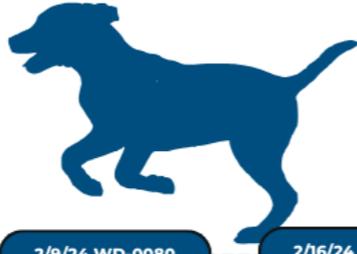
Current Waitlist-

- 590 plus providers lists (\$137,250)
- Requests currently being issued from Jan/Feb 24.
- current distribution rate approx. \$60,00 a month **(will need to drop)**

Waitlist Tracking (how's it going?)

Mass Animal Fund Waitlist Dog Voucher Tracker

Thank you for requesting a spay/neuter voucher for your dog. When your application was approved you were issued a waitlist number. This chart is updated weekly and designed so that you can check on our waitlist progress, and help estimate when your voucher will be issued.



1/10/23 wd-0014

Issued Numbers will be listed in blue

1/31/24 WD-0060

In January 2024, 254 Vouchers were issued

2/9/24 WD-0080

In February 2024, 324 Vouchers were issued

2/16/24 WD-0091

WD-0001 WD-0002 WD-0003 WD-0004 WD-0005
WD-0006 WD-0007 WD-0008 WD-0009 WD-0010
WD-0011 WD-0012 WD-0013 WD-0014 WD-0015
WD-0016 WD-0017 WD-0018 WD-0019 WD-0020
WD-0021 WD-0022 WD-0023 WD-0024 WD-0025

WD-0026 WD-0027 WD-0028 WD-0029 WD-0030
WD-0031 WD-0032 WD-0033 WD-0034 WD-0035
WD-0036 WD-0037 WD-0038 WD-0039 WD-0040
WD-0041 WD-0042 WD-0043 WD-0044 WD-0045
WD-0046 WD-0047 WD-0048 WD-0049 WD-0050

WD-0051 WD-0052 WD-0053 WD-0054 WD-0055
WD-0056 WD-0057 WD-0058 WD-0059 WD-0060
WD-0061 WD-0062 WD-0063 WD-0064 WD-0065
WD-0066 WD-0067 WD-0068 WD-0069 WD-0070
WD-0071 WD-0072 WD-0073 WD-0074 WD-0075

WD-0076 WD-0077 WD-0078 WD-0079 WD-0080
WD-0081 WD-0082 WD-0083 WD-0084 WD-0085
WD-0086 WD-0087 WD-0088 WD-0089 WD-0090
WD-0091 WD-0092 WD-0093 WD-0094 WD-0095
WD-0096 WD-0097 WD-0098 WD-0099 WD-0100

4/26/24 WD-0163

In March 2024, 310 vouchers were issued

3/1/24 WD-0132

2/23/24 WD-0110



WD-0151 WD-0152 WD-0153 WD-0154 WD-0155
WD-0156 WD-0157 WD-0158 WD-0159 WD-0160
WD-0161 WD-0162 WD-0163 WD-0164 WD-0165
WD-0166 WD-0167 WD-0168 WD-0169 WD-0170
WD-0171 WD-0172 WD-0173 WD-0174 WD-0175

WD-0126 WD-0127 WD-0128 WD-0129 WD-0130
WD-0131 WD-0132 WD-0133 WD-0134 WD-0135
WD-0136 WD-0137 WD-0138 WD-0139 WD-0140
WD-0141 WD-0142 WD-0143 WD-0144 WD-0145
WD-0146 WD-0147 WD-0148 WD-0149 WD-0150

WD-0101 WD-0102 WD-0103 WD-0104 WD-0105
WD-0106 WD-0107 WD-0108 WD-0109 WD-0110
WD-0111 WD-0112 WD-0113 WD-0114 WD-0115
WD-0116 WD-0117 WD-0118 WD-0119 WD-0120
WD-0121 WD-0122 WD-0123 WD-0124 WD-0125

5/3/24 WD-0176

In April/May 2024, 493 vouchers were issued

5/31/24 WD-0216

6/28/24 WD-0247

In June 2024, 223 vouchers were issued

7/23/24 WD-0275

WD-0176 WD-0177 WD-0178 WD-0179 WD-0180
WD-0181 WD-0182 WD-0183 WD-0184 WD-0185
WD-0186 WD-0187 WD-0188 WD-0189 WD-0190
WD-0191 WD-0192 WD-0193 WD-0194 WD-0195
WD-0196 WD-0197 WD-0198 WD-0199 WD-0200

WD-0201 WD-0202 WD-0203 WD-0204 WD-0205
WD-0206 WD-0207 WD-0208 WD-0209 WD-0210
WD-0211 WD-0212 WD-0213 WD-0214 WD-0215
WD-0216 WD-0217 WD-0218 WD-0219 WD-0220
WD-0221 WD-0222 WD-0223 WD-0224 WD-0225

WD-0226 WD-0227 WD-0228 WD-0229 WD-0230
WD-0231 WD-0232 WD-0233 WD-0234 WD-0235
WD-0236 WD-0237 WD-0238 WD-0239 WD-0240
WD-0241 WD-0242 WD-0243 WD-0244 WD-0245
WD-0246 WD-0247 WD-0248 WD-0249 WD-0250

WD-0251 WD-0252 WD-0253 WD-0254 WD-0255
WD-0256 WD-0257 WD-0258 WD-0259 WD-0260
WD-0261 WD-0262 WD-0263 WD-0264 WD-0265
WD-0266 WD-0267 WD-0268 WD-0269 WD-0270
WD-0271 WD-0272 WD-0273 WD-0274 WD-0275

Estimated May

Estimated July

Estimated February

WD-0621 WD-0622 WD-0623 WD-0624 WD-0625
WD-0626 WD-0627 WD-0628 WD-0629 WD-0630
WD-0631 WD-0632 WD-0633 WD-0634 WD-0635 WD-0636
WD-0637 WD-0638 WD-0639 WD-0640 WD-0641
WD-0642 WD-0643 WD-0644 WD-0645 WD-0646

WD-0593 WD-0594 WD-0595 WD-0596 WD-0597
WD-0598 WD-0599 WD-0600 WD-0601 WD-0602
WD-0603 WD-0604 WD-0605 WD-0606 WD-0607
WD-0608 WD-0609 WD-0610 WD-0611
WD-0612 WD-0613 WD-0614 WD-0615
WD-0616 WD-0617 WD-0618 WD-0619 WD-0620



Estimated

Estimated

WD-0647 WD-0648 WD-0649 WD-0650 WD-0651
WD-0652 WD-0653 WD-0654 WD-0655
WD-0656 WD-0657 WD-0658 WD-0659
WD-0660 WD-0661 WD-0662 WD-0663
WD-0664

Estimated

Estimated



8/27/24 WD-0328

WD-0525 WD-0526 WD-0527 WD-0528 WD-0529
WD-0530 WD-0531 WD-0532 WD-0533 WD-0534
WD-0535 WD-0536 WD-0537 WD-0539 WD-0540
WD-0541 WD-0542 WD-0543 WD-0544 WD-0545
WD-0546 WD-0547 WD-0548 WD-0549

8/8/24 WD-0328

Estimated August

WD-0501 WD-0502 WD-0503 WD-0504 WD-0505
WD-0506 WD-0507 WD-0508 WD-0509 WD-0510
WD-0511 WD-0512 WD-0513 WD-0514 WD-0515
WD-0516 WD-0517 WD-0518 WD-0519 WD-0520
WD-0521 WD-0522 WD-0523 WD-0524

7/25/24 WD-0284

WD-0276 WD-0277 WD-0278 WD-0279 WD-0280
WD-0281 WD-0282 WD-0283 WD-0284 WD-0285
WD-0286 WD-0287 WD-0288 WD-0289 WD-0290
WD-0291 WD-0292 WD-0293 WD-0294 WD-0295
WD-0296 WD-0297 WD-0298 WD-0299 WD-0300

Vouchers in this section are being issued out of order to prevent surgery backups in specific areas

9/17/24 WD-00368

Estimated September

WD-0350 WD-0351 WD-0352 WD-0353 WD-0354
WD-0355 WD-0356 WD-0357 WD-0358 WD-0359
WD-0360 WD-0361 WD-0362 WD-0363 WD-0364
WD-0365 WD-0366 WD-0367 WD-0368 WD-0369
WD-0370 WD-0371 WD-0372 WD-0373 WD-0374

WD-0375 WD-0376 WD-0377 WD-0378 WD-0379
WD-0380 WD-0381 WD-0382 WD-0383 WD-0384
WD-0385 WD-0386 WD-0387 WD-0388 WD-0389
WD-0390 WD-0391 WD-0392 WD-0393 WD-0394
WD-0395 WD-0396 WD-0397 WD-0398 WD-0399

Estimated October

WD-0400 WD-0401 WD-0402 WD-0403 WD-0404
WD-0405 WD-0406 WD-0407 WD-0408 WD-0409
WD-0410 WD-0411 WD-0412 WD-0413 WD-0414
WD-0415 WD-0416 WD-0417 WD-0418
WD-0419 WD-0420 WD-0421 WD-0422
WD-0423 WD-0424 WD-0425

Estimated November

WD-0480 WD-0481 WD-0482 WD-0483 WD-0484
WD-0485 WD-0486 WD-0487 WD-0488 WD-0489
WD-0490 WD-0491 WD-0492 WD-0493 WD-0494
WD-0495 WD-0496 WD-0497 WD-0498 WD-0499
WD-0500 WD-0501 WD-0502 WD-0503 WD-0504
WD-0505 WD-0506

WD-0455 WD-0454 WD-0455 WD-0456 WD-0457
WD-0458 WD-0459 WD-0460 WD-0461 WD-0462
WD-0463 WD-0464 WD-0465 WD-0466 WD-0467
WD-0468 WD-0469 WD-0470 WD-0471
WD-0472 WD-0473 WD-0474 WD-0475
WD-0476 WD-0477 WD-0478 WD-0479

WD-0426 WD-0427 WD-0428 WD-0429 WD-0430
WD-0431 WD-0432 WD-0433 WD-0434 WD-0435
WD-0436 WD-0437 WD-0438 WD-0439 WD-0440
WD-0441 WD-0442 WD-0443 WD-0444 WD-0445
WD-0446 WD-0447 WD-0448 WD-0449 WD-0450
WD-0451 WD-0452

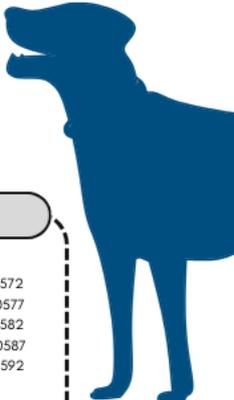
Estimated December

WD-0507 WD-0508 WD-0509 WD-0510 WD-0511
WD-0512 WD-0513 WD-0514 WD-0515 WD-0516
WD-0517 WD-0518 WD-0519 WD-0520 WD-0521
WD-0522 WD-0523 WD-0524 WD-0525
WD-0526 WD-0527 WD-0528 WD-0529
WD-0530 WD-0531 WD-0532 WD-0533
WD-0534 WD-0535 WD-0536 WD-0537

WD-0538 WD-0539 WD-0540 WD-0541
WD-0542 WD-0543 WD-0544 WD-0545
WD-0546 WD-0547 WD-0548 WD-0549
WD-0550 WD-0551 WD-0552 WD-0553
WD-0554 WD-0555 WD-0556 WD-0557
WD-0558 WD-0559 WD-0560 WD-0561
WD-0562 WD-0563 WD-0564 WD-0565
WD-0566 WD-0567

Estimated January

WD-0568 WD-0569 WD-0570 WD-0571
WD-0572 WD-0573 WD-0574 WD-0575
WD-0576 WD-0577 WD-0578 WD-0579
WD-0580 WD-0581 WD-0582 WD-0583
WD-0584 WD-0585 WD-0586 WD-0587
WD-0588 WD-0589 WD-0590 WD-0591
WD-0592



SPAY NEUTER VOUCHER PROGRAM



Current Rates for FY25 went into effect July, 2024

Tier 1	Cat Neuter	\$150
Tier II	Cat Spay	\$200
Tier III	Small Dog Neuter	\$300 \$250
Tier IV	Small Dog Spay/ Large Dog Neuter	\$350 \$300
Tier V	Large Dog Spay	\$400 \$350

Other Projects in the Works

- **Animal Outcome Tracking**
- **Billboards (in design, due Oct 15th)**
- **Intern? unpaid Sept. 30th start. Focus on tax season promos.**

8 applications screening for Interviews

- **ACO Guidance documents**



Billboards. Any got some new ideas?

Visit the warm and
fuzzy tax line...



Line 33F

Other Projects



Animal Record Requirements for Town and City Clerks

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Division of Animal Health provides resources and training to municipal Animal Control Officers (ACOs) and Animal Inspectors (AIs). We would like to extend our resources to town and city clerks since their collaboration with ACOs is essential to ensure the health and safety of animals in the community they serve.

Dog Licensing



MGL Chapter 140 Section 137: All dogs 6 months or older must be licensed. A newly acquired dog or a dog that is new to the town has 30 days to obtain a license if it is 6 months or older.

The license tag must be inscribed with the dog's license number, city, and year of issue.

License fees are determined by municipalities with the following considerations: spayed/neutered dogs shall be less than intact dogs, no fee shall be charged for an ADA-defined service dog, and a municipality may waive the fee for a dog owned by a senior 70 years or older.

A license requires proof that the dog has a current rabies vaccination. Medical exemptions for rabies vaccinations are only valid if signed by a Massachusetts veterinarian for an immune-mediated disease or anaphylaxis.

All licensed dogs should be listed on the municipal licensing list maintained by the licensing authority. ACOs are required to check this list for matches when a dog is found at large, to allow this the list must be accessible and easy to search.

The licensing list should contain the license number and status, rabies vaccination expiration, a detailed description of the animal, and the owner /keeper's address and contact information.

Individual dog licensing currently does not apply to dogs housed at a licensed kennel, or dogs housed at a research institution.

ACO Records in Clerk's Office



MGL Chapter 140, Sections 151A (b): ACOs must keep and maintain records on each animal in the officer's custody. All domestic animals (alive or deceased) and wildlife (alive) require records.

A copy of these records must be forwarded to the town or city clerk every 30 days. Copies of the records shall be kept in for 2 years in the office of the city or town clerk. It is acceptable to keep these records in an electronic format if needed.

Animal Placement Options for Animal Control Officers



The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Division of Animal Health is responsible for providing training and guidance to animal control officers (ACOs) and for inspections of municipal animal holding facilities. Recently MDAR has become concerned about animals from municipal facilities being transferred to unlicensed shelters/rescues and municipal officials directing residents to work with unlicensed shelters/rescues. We want to make sure ACOs receive guidance on this matter, so we developed this guide on who is authorized to take in and adopt out animals under the Mass General Laws.

ACOs are responsible for taking in stray dogs found within their municipality. Many municipalities also ask their ACOs to assist with owner surrendered animals, including cats and other domestic animals. Animal Intake forms must be completed for every animal that an ACO has in their custody, and rightful owners must be searched for in every case.

If no owner comes forward, the municipality has a decision to make. It is expected that the ACO will make a rational and reasonable decision – adoptable animals should not be put down, and dangerous animals should not be placed back into the community. For animal placements, ACOs have only four options under the Mass General Laws. These options are return, adopt, transfer, or euthanize and the criteria that need to be met for each option are listed.

Option 1. RETURN

Every effort should be made to return animals to the rightful owners.

Stray dogs are required to be held for 7 days to provide an owner time to come forward and reclaim them. Upon returning a dog to their owner, ACOs must follow through to ensure that the dog is up to date with rabies vaccination requirements and that it has a current municipal dog license. There is no required holding period for cats or other stray animals that come into the possession of animal control programs, but every effort should be made to find their owners as well. Only cats can be returned to field. If an ACO takes in an unsocialized healthy cat, and no owner comes forward, they can be spayed/neutered/vaccinated and returned back to the location where they were found. This process for cats is called Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR). The Mass Animal Fund may provide a voucher so these services can be completed at no cost to the municipality.

If an animal is not returned to the owner, only the below options are available.

Option 2: ADOPT

Animals may be placed for adoption directly by the municipal animal control officer. The ACO is authorized by MGL Chapter 140, section 151A to adopt out animals found within the towns for which they have been designated as animal control officer.

However, running an adoption program is not a simple undertaking. The municipality, not just the ACO, must take into consideration the liabilities that may be involved with adoption programs.

A behavior assessment must be conducted to ensure the animal is safe to be transferred to a new home. If you're not comfortable doing the assessment, ask for help. A REPUTABLE licensed shelter will work with you if it means helping an animal. Training for animal behavior assessments is available from many sources. They are not all the same! Make sure you are working with knowledgeable and respected behaviorists. ANIMATCH is a program through the Mass Animal Coalition that may be available to help you with evaluations. If you are stuck, please contact MDAR, and we can provide further guidance.

It is also important to assess the health status of an animal prior to placing it with an adoptive owner. If the town is conducting adoptions, you should have a relationship with a veterinarian who can examine animals before they are placed (they may need to be spayed/neutered or vaccinated before adoption anyway).

Other Projects

Pet FRIENDLY ETIQUETTE TIPS

Brought to you by *line33F*



More and more places are welcoming pets to their properties. Let's thank them by practicing good pet etiquette so that everyone can enjoy the location!

Know your pet's triggers



Even if a place is pet friendly, it doesn't mean it's appropriate for ALL pets. If your pet gets fearful, scared, aggressive, loud or stressed by certain scenarios make sure that the places you bring them to won't have any of their triggers.

Do some research.

Some pet friendly places only allow pets in certain areas or at special events, so call ahead or look on their website to see if there are any restrictions to consider before going.



Check reviews as well!

When visiting, pets should wear collars and ID tags at all times and always be on a leash or in a carrier when required. Pack a pet travel kit for each pet, include: food, treats, water, bowls, waste bags, a small towel, and a copy of vaccine records.



At a pet friendly restaurant, make sure your pet sits on the floor. Don't let your pet eat off your plate or sit on your lap, it's inconsiderate and it can be dangerous for them, since many people foods are toxic to pets.



Be Flexible. New places can be stressful. If your pet is acting disruptive or scared, take them home or find a quiet place to give them a break. But, NEVER leave them in a hot car!



ALWAYS pick up after your pet and dispose of waste bags in designated trash containers or take it with you.



Accidents happen. Be prepared. Keep your veterinarian's phone number handy.



Keep your pet under control and always ask before you let them meet someone or another pet. The other person or animal may not want to be introduced your furry friend.



Watch the weather. Don't bring pets to outdoor venues if the weather could spook them or be hazardous to their health.



Mass Animal Fund wishes everyone **SAFE and Happy** travels with their pet!





Animal Abandonment Cases

Guidance for Animal Control Officers

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Division of Animal Health is responsible for providing training and guidance to animal control officers (ACOs) and for inspections of municipal animal holding facilities. Recently MDAR has received inquiries from ACOs about what to do in abandoned animal cases when an owner is known. We want to make sure ACOs receive guidance on this matter, so we met with peers in animal welfare from the Animal Rescue League of Boston, MSPCA, Boston Workhorse Relief Association, Northwestern District Attorney's Office, ACOAM, and Boston Animal Control to create this document.

ACOs are often asked to take custody of owned animals in emergency situations. ACOs should make every effort to facilitate the reunion of these animals with their rightful owners. However, sometimes return-to-owner efforts can be unsuccessful. Using abandoned animal protocols during and after owned animal intakes can help establish animal custody and reduce length of stay in your facility.

Please keep in mind, the steps listed below are what our peer group decided to be best protocols/practices for specific types of abandonment cases in two categories. **ACOs should first receive approval from their municipality and their respective legal counsel before implementing protocols/practices in this document.**

Please note the following: An Animal Claim Notice 10-day letter is referred to as an "Animal Claim Notice" below.

Category 1: Involuntary Abandonments

A domestic animal enters ACO care due to the arrest of their owner for a non-animal related criminal offense, or an owner's medical emergency such as death or hospitalization due to a physical or mental condition or involuntary commitment through the Court for alcohol or substance use (M.G.L. c. 123, § 35) or mental illness (M.G.L. c. 123, § 12).

For all involuntary abandonment situations, the group recommends trying to get an Animal Claim Notice signed at the time of arrest, or hospitalization whenever possible.

Each municipality should have their town or city's legal counsel approve the content of the Animal Claim Notice and this process prior to its use. At the end of this document, you will find a list of key information contained in the Animal Claim Notice.

This Animal Claim Notice letter's primary goal is to provide proof that the owner is aware that if the animal is not claimed by the stated date (recommended to be at least 10 days from notice), then the animal will be considered abandoned and will become property of the municipality and may be adopted, transferred, or euthanized at the municipality's discretion.

If a signed Animal Claim Notice could not be obtained at the time of intake of the animal, due to the non cooperation or physical or mental condition or incapacity of the owner, the group would recommend completing the following steps:

- Send a cover letter and an Animal Claim Notice to the owner's last known location through certified mail AND regular mail (in case mail is being forwarded).
- If the owner is hospitalized or incarcerated, send notice to the owner's case manager, or legal counsel. If the owner has been arrested for a non-animal related criminal offense, the owner should have legal counsel. In this case, an Assistant District Attorney ("ADA") in the Court where the non-animal related criminal case is pending should be able to assist in making contact with legal counsel.
- If the owner is deceased, reach out to the police department to obtain information on next of kin and send a cover letter and an Animal Claim Notice through certified mail AND regular mail (in case mail is being forwarded) to next of kin or to the owner's estate.
- If the owner has special circumstances, consider longer term options for housing the animal such as foster homes, safe pet programs, or emergency shelters (for disasters), etc. If long term housing options are available, make sure to state the terms and conditions in a letter to the owner including:
 - (a) Time frame of housing extension
 - (b) Location of housing, foster, boarding facility etc.
 - (c) Fees that will be owed, and/or waived
 - (d) Medical requirements, vaccines, spay/neuter etc
- If the owner chooses to surrender the animal instead of claiming, have them sign and date a surrender form.

ACO TRAINING



2024 Core Competencies starts NEXT WEEK!

- Session 1 Sept. 23rd + 30th Palmer Police Station
- (virtual option only for session I)

20 signed up for in-person, 25 for virtual

- Session 2 Oct. 8th and 9Th Dedham ARL

42 signed up for in person, registration still open.

ACO TRAINING



NEW Trainer Reimbursements. CORE TRAINERS

Mass Animal Fund Trainer Rates- Instructor rates for courses where the curriculum was created by the MDAR Division of Animal Health

5. Per Trainer Rates

- I. One-Two Hour Course or Scheduled Train the Trainer Time -\$100
- II. Two and a Half to Four Hour Course or Scheduled Train the Trainer Time- \$200
- III. Four and a Half to Eight Hour Course or Scheduled Train the Trainer Time- \$400
- IV. MAF Trainers may also receive a \$150 dollar travel subsidy if overnight accommodations are needed.

The Contractor shall provide trainings throughout the year at the request of the Department and at mutually agreed upon times/dates between the Department and the Contractor.

ACO TRAINING



NEW Trainer Reimbursements. CE TRAINERS

Daily Continuing Education Training Rates- for courses offered at no-cost to animal control officers and support staff.

I. A free in-person venue/virtual platform whereby there is no cost to the Contractor, the rates below shall:

- I. One-Two Hour course - \$300
- II. Two and a Half to Four Hour course- \$400
- III. Four and a Half to Eight Hour course - \$600

2. If the Contractor incurs the cost of providing the venue/platform, the rates below shall be:

- I. One-Two Hour course- \$400
- II. Two and a Half to Four Hour course - \$600
- II. Four and a Half to Eight Hour course - \$1,000

ACO TRAINING



NEW Trainer Reimbursements.

Per Officer Continuing Education Training Rates- a portion of the course cost will be subsidized, and the course will be offered at a reduced rate for animal control officers and support staff.

4. Per officer training subsidy

Subsidy rates will be reimbursed according to the number of animal control officers and support staff in attendance.

- I. One-Two Hour course - \$15
- II. Two and a Half to Four Hour course- \$30
- III. Four and a Half to Eight Hour course - \$60
- IV. *Multiple Day course- \$15- \$60 (per day)

*Daily/subsidy rate must be agreed upon between contractor and the department prior to first day of each course.



**Last year we saw a huge drop in compliance.
2024 mailing- revamped designation portal and sheet.
82% compliance in 2024 up from around 50%!!!**

**Planning on same format for December 2025
ACO designation mailing.**



Next Meeting....

Dec/Jan?